

Beis Aharon School

83–95 Bethune Road, London N16 5ED

Inspection dates

19 July 2017

Overall outcome

The school does not meet all of the independent school standards that were checked during this inspection

Main inspection findings

Part 1. Quality of education provided

Paragraph 2(1), 2(1)(a), 2(1)(b), 2(1)(b)(i), 2(2), 2(2)(a), 2(2)(f) and 2(2)(h)

- At the time of the previous inspection, leaders had introduced some improvements to the curriculum; for example, reading resources in Years 1 and 2 and more science activities for pupils. However, overall the curriculum lacked depth and did not ensure that pupils made good progress and were well prepared for their future lives. The oldest pupils did not study science, there were no technological experiences, physical education was restricted and the teaching of English in the early years was too limited.
- The increased time for English and mathematics and the new schemes of learning for these subjects are having a positive impact on pupils' progress, particularly in Years 1 and 2. However, leaders have not ensured that this is a consistent picture in older year groups. Pupils' English skills are a significant barrier to their learning.
- Science is now taught in all year groups. However, opportunities for pupils to learn a range of skills in physical education are not yet fully in place as described in the curriculum plans. Plans for technological experiences have not yet been implemented.
- The requirements for these paragraphs remain unmet.

Paragraph 2(1), 2(1)(b), 2(1)(b)(ii), 2(2), 2(2)(d), 2(2)(d)(i), 2(2)(d)(ii), 2(2)(h) and 2(2)(i)

- At the time of the previous inspection, leaders and governors held the view that certain protected characteristics were not to be referred to through the curriculum and in classes. As a result, pupils did not have a broad enough experience to help them prepare for life in British society.
- Early in the inspection, school leaders made it clear that although they teach pupils to have respect for everyone, not all of the protected characteristics are referred to or discussed. Leaders requested that inspectors not question pupils directly about these particular characteristics, such as sexual orientation and gender identity.
- School leaders have begun to make some small steps towards meeting the standards. They have put together a calendar of the festivals of different faiths and plan to talk to pupils about it. However, this has not yet happened and pupils continue to have a very limited knowledge of other faiths and religions.

- The requirements for these paragraphs remain unmet.

Paragraph 2(2), 2(2)(e), 2(2)(e)(i) and 2(2)(e)(ii) and 2(2)(e)(iii)

- At the time of the previous inspection, the careers advice and guidance made available to pupils was too limited. The careers guidance policy was not specific to the school.
- Leaders have begun to make changes and implement improvements. The careers policy is now specific to the school. It aims to broaden opportunities for pupils and 'encourage an employment-focused attitude'. Leaders have also taken practical steps to broaden pupils' horizons. Pupils visited an indoor city for children, where they can learn about different careers through play. The police also visited the school to talk to pupils about staying safe and careers in the police force.
- The policy states that older pupils will have careers lessons in English but no evidence was presented to show that this is now happening. The policy does not explain how impartial advice will be delivered, or who will provide it.

- The requirements for these paragraphs remain unmet.

Paragraph 3, 3(a), 3(b), 3(c), 3(d), 3(e), 3(f) and 3(g)

- At the time of the previous inspection, leaders were evaluating pupils' performance against national norms. Teachers had started to use information from assessments to help pupils catch up and were setting more challenging work for the most able pupils; however, these developments were in the very early stages. The range of skills pupils learned was still too narrow, particularly in writing.
- Pupils' poor speech and language skills in English are a significant barrier to pupils' learning and progress in the secular curriculum subjects. Overall, pupils' basic skills in English are weak, including in handwriting, pronunciation, spelling and punctuation. The purpose of some pieces of writing is unclear. Teachers are starting to introduce more extended creative writing opportunities for pupils but these are not yet clearly embedded. Much of the work still involves pupils copying text or copying out their own work.
- Pupils enjoy mathematics; they are motivated to solve problems and were keen to show their work to inspectors. However, teachers typically do not set pupils tasks that are challenging enough to ensure that they make progress.
- Work in pupils' books shows that pupils are benefiting from more time studying English and mathematics. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 are making stronger progress following the introduction of new curriculum schemes. These schemes are starting to improve the way teachers plan learning for pupils.
- Visits to lessons indicate that training for teachers is having a positive impact on improving teachers' subject knowledge and range of teaching skills. Teachers are beginning to question pupils effectively to enthuse and excite them about their learning.
- The requirements of this paragraph remain unmet.
- The school does not meet all the requirements for this part.

Part 2. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils

Paragraph 5, 5(a), 5(b), 5(b)(i), 5(b)(ii), 5(b)(iii), 5(b)(iv), 5(b)(v), 5(b)(vi) and 5(b)(vii)

- At the time of the previous inspection, pupils' social and cultural awareness and their

knowledge of different faiths and lifestyles were underdeveloped and restricted because aspects of the curriculum were not taught. Pupils' knowledge of British institutions was superficial and leaders were only just starting to develop pupils' understanding of fundamental British values.

- Pupils' understanding of different faiths remains limited. Pupils' learning touches on other faiths in Jewish studies. However, there is no specific, systematic way in which pupils learn specific details about the faith and practice of other religions. The school's ethos of respect for everyone is deeply held and pupils expressed this clearly to inspectors. However, stereotypical views of followers of other faiths were found in pupils' writing during the inspection. School leaders agreed that this should be challenged.
- School leaders have developed more opportunities for pupils to learn about British institutions. Pupils learned about democracy, the general election and the key messages from the different political parties. Older pupils held a mock election. Pupils also learned about the Queen's official birthday and key ceremonies, although very little about the monarch's constitutional role. Both these occasions were used as a context for developing writing. Leaders are proud of these developments and they are a step in the right direction. However, these opportunities are not yet written into curriculum plans and firmly embedded in practice.
- The requirements of this paragraph remain unmet.
- The school does not meet all the requirements for this part.

Part 3. Welfare, health and safety of pupils

Paragraphs 7, 7(a), and 7(b)

- At the time of the previous inspection, the school's safeguarding policy met requirements. However, pupils' knowledge of how to keep themselves safe from harm was too limited.
- The safeguarding policy is up to date and meets requirements. The school does not have a website but the policy is available on request to parents. The school's designated safeguarding lead and the deputy have recently completed the required training. All staff have completed an appropriate level of safeguarding training, including in relation to the 'Prevent' duty.
- However, the culture of safeguarding is not well developed and secure enough to ensure that pupils are safe. Leaders and staff do not understand that it is their responsibility to refer concerns about a pupil's welfare promptly to the designated safeguarding lead (DSL) or the deputy DSL. The DSL is clear that there are outstanding concerns which have not yet been forwarded to him or his deputy. Consequently, leaders do not ensure that pupils who may be vulnerable receive the help and guidance they need.
- The requirements of this paragraph remain unmet.

Paragraph 10

- At the time of the previous inspection, the scope of the school's anti-bullying strategy was not broad enough to ensure that it was effective. Some aspects of bullying such as homophobic bullying were omitted from the anti-bullying policy. Incidents of bullying and the school's response were not recorded.
- There has been an improvement towards meeting this standard. The policy has been

rewritten and now refers to prejudicial, including homophobic, bullying. The new bullying record form also has sections for recording the range of different types of bullying. Records of instances of bullying, details and the school's response are now recorded by the leaders with responsibility for safeguarding pupils. A 'worry' box has been set up where pupils can leave anonymous concerns and an independent listener has recently been appointed. Leaders plan that pupils will be able to speak confidentially to the listener in school about any concerns they have. These improvements have been only recently implemented and some are not yet embedded.

- The requirements of this paragraph remain unmet.

Paragraph 15

- At the time of the previous inspection, there were a number of discrepancies on the admission register. The number of pupils identified on the admission register did not match the total number of pupils on the attendance registers.
- The admission register continues to be inaccurate. Leaders stated that this was because of software issues. However, leaders have not taken steps to ensure that this is put right. On resolving these queries during the inspection, the admission register and the attendance registers now match.
- Leaders told inspectors that no new pupils have been admitted since 26 April 2016. This was confirmed in the registers scrutinised by inspectors.
- Incorrect attendance codes are used on the attendance registers in the early years. Consequently, leaders and staff are not able to identify and analyse children's absence promptly.
- The requirements of this paragraph remain unmet.
- The school does not meet all the requirements for this part.

Part 8. Quality of leadership in and management of schools

Paragraph 34(1), 34(1)(a), 34(1)(b) and 34(1)(c)

- At the time of the previous inspection, many of the independent school standards were unmet. New governors had started work to improve the school and had continued to draw upon the support of external consultants to help them meet the independent school standards.
- Leaders and governors now have a realistic view of the work that they need to do to ensure that all of the standards are met. Their actions are starting to address some of the remaining requirements. However, the pace of improvement has been slow. Consequently, all of the standards checked at this inspection are still unmet. Nevertheless, there has been a change in governors' thinking and their approach to ensuring that the school works towards possibly meeting all the independent school standards in the future.
- Governors continued to express the view, as stated at the last inspection, that parents in the community would not allow them to talk to pupils specifically about certain lifestyles and the protected characteristics as set out in the Equality Act 2010. However, the governors are themselves parents of pupils in the school and also take their leadership responsibilities to improve the school very seriously. Consequently, governors are continuing to seek some resolution which might meet the standards without

compromising their faith. In this context, their partnership work with the external consultants is having a positive impact across the school, particularly in the anti-bullying policy; where the rationale for including reference to homophobic bullying is clearly and eloquently explained to parents. Nevertheless, the standards remain unmet and this has a negative impact on pupils' learning and welfare.

- The school does not meet all the requirements for this part.
- The requirements of this paragraph remain unmet.

Compliance with regulatory requirements

The school does not meet the requirements of the schedule to The Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 ('the independent school standards') and associated requirements that were checked during this inspection. This included the standards and requirements that the school was judged to not comply with at the previous inspection. Not all of the standards and associated requirements were checked during this inspection.

The school does not meet the following independent school standards

Standards that were not met at the previous inspection and remain unmet at this inspection

- The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor ensures that a written policy on the curriculum, supported by appropriate plans and schemes of work, which provides for the matters specified below is drawn up and implemented effectively (paragraph 2(1) and 2(1)(a)).
- The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor ensures that a written policy, plans and schemes of work take into account the ages, aptitudes and needs of all pupils, including those pupils with an education, health and care plan (paragraph 2(1), 2(1)(b) and 2(1)(b)(i)).
- The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor ensures that a written policy, plans and schemes of work do not undermine the fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs (paragraph 2(1), 2(1)(b) and 2(1)(b)(ii)).
- The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor ensures that there is full-time supervised education for pupils of compulsory school age (construed in accordance with section 8 of the Education Act 1996), which gives pupils experience in linguistic, mathematical, scientific, technological, human and social, physical and aesthetic and creative education (paragraph 2(2) and 2(2)(a)).
- The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor ensures personal, social, health and economic education which reflects the school's aim and ethos; and encourages respect for other people, paying particular regard to the protected characteristics set out in the 2010 Act (paragraph 2(2), 2(2)(d), 2(2)(d)(i) and 2(2)(d)(ii)).
- The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor ensures that for pupils receiving secondary education, they have access to accurate, up-to-date careers guidance that is presented in an impartial manner, enables them to make informed choices about a broad range of career options and helps to encourage them to fulfil their potential (paragraph 2(2), 2(2)(e), 2(2)(e)(i) and 2(2)(e)(ii) and 2(2)(e)(iii)).
- The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor ensures that for pupils below compulsory school age, there is a programme of activities which is appropriate to their educational needs in relation to personal, social, emotional and physical development and communication and language skills (paragraph 2(2) and 2(2)(f)).
- The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor ensures that all pupils have the opportunity to learn and make progress; and are effectively prepared for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of life in British society (paragraph 2(2), 2(2)(h) and 2(2)(i)).
- The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor ensures that the teaching at the

school: enables pupils to acquire new knowledge and make good progress according to their ability so that they increase their understanding and develop their skills in the subjects taught; fosters in pupils self-motivation, the application of intellectual, physical and creative effort, interest in their work and the ability to think and learn for themselves (paragraph 3, 3(a) and 3(b)).

- The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor ensures that the teaching at the school: involves well planned lessons and effective teaching methods, activities and management of class time; shows a good understanding of the aptitudes, needs and prior attainments of the pupils, and ensures that these are taken into account in the planning of lessons; demonstrates good knowledge and understanding of the subject matter being taught; utilises effectively classroom resources of a good quality, quantity and range; and demonstrates that a framework is in place to assess pupils' work regularly and thoroughly and uses information from that assessment to plan teaching so that pupils can progress (paragraph 3, 3(c), 3(d), 3(e), 3(f) and 3(g)).
- The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor ensures that the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils at the school is met if the proprietor actively promotes the fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs (paragraph 5 and 5(a)).
- The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor ensures that they comply with the standard about the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils at the school, by taking steps to ensure that principles are actively promoted, which: enable pupils to develop their self-knowledge, self-esteem and self-confidence; enable pupils to distinguish right from wrong and to respect the civil and criminal law of England; encourage pupils to accept responsibility for their behaviour, show initiative and understand how they can contribute positively to the lives of those living and working in the locality in which the school is situated and to society more widely; enable pupils to acquire a broad general knowledge of and respect for public institutions and services in England; further tolerance and harmony between different cultural traditions by enabling pupils to acquire an appreciation of and respect for their own and other cultures; encourage respect for other people, paying particular regard to the protected characteristics set out in the 2010 Act; and encourage respect for democracy and support for participation in the democratic process, including respect for the basis on which the law is made and applied in England (paragraph 5, 5(b), 5(b)(i), 5(b)(ii), 5(b)(iii), 5(b)(iv), 5(b)(v), 5(b)(vi) and 5(b)(vii)).
- The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor ensures that arrangements are made to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils at the school; and such arrangements have regard to any guidance issued by the Secretary of State (paragraph 7, 7(a) and 7(b)).
- The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor ensures that bullying at the school is prevented in so far as reasonably practicable, by the drawing up and implementation of an effective anti-bullying strategy (paragraph 10).
- The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor ensures that an admission and attendance register is maintained in accordance with the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006 (paragraph 15).
- The standard in this paragraph is met if the proprietor ensures that persons with

leadership and management responsibilities at the school demonstrate good skills and knowledge appropriate to their role, fulfil their responsibilities effectively and actively promote the well-being of pupils, so that the independent school standards are met consistently (paragraph 34(1), 34(1)(a), 34(1)(b) and 34(1)(c)).

School details

Unique reference number	131170
DfE registration number	204/6398
Inspection number	10039496

This inspection was carried out under section 109(1) and (2) of the Education and Skills Act 2008, the purpose of which is to advise the Secretary of State for Education about the school's suitability for continued registration as an independent school.

Type of school	Independent Jewish day school for boys
School status	Independent school
Age range of pupils	3 to 13
Gender of pupils	Boys
Number of pupils on the school roll	323
Proprietor	Joseph Lipschitz
Chair	Aaron Hoffman
Headteacher	Mr Elie Leichtag
Annual fees (day pupils)	£2,860
Telephone number	020 8809 9444
Website	The school has no website
Email address	hfrankl@ttbal.plus.com
Date of previous standard inspection	18–20 November 2014

Information about this school

- Beis Aharon School is an independent Orthodox Jewish day school for boys in the London Borough of Hackney.
- The main school occupies a purpose-built building. The provision for children in early years operates from a site opposite the main school, at 122 Bethune Road, London N16 5ED. This is a residential house which has been converted for educational use.
- The school is registered for pupils between the ages of three and 13.
- The school's previous standard inspection took place in November 2014 when the school was judged to be inadequate. The school has received five monitoring inspections to check on the school's progress towards meeting all the independent school standards.

- The school was issued with an order under section S116 (1)(a) of the 2008 Act on 24 September 2015, which prevents the school from admitting any new pupils from 26 April 2016.
- The school does not use any off-site educational provision for pupils.
- The school has a small number of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. There are no pupils with an education, health and care plan.
- Pupils study Jewish religious studies (Kodesh) in the morning. This is taught in Yiddish. The secular curriculum (Chol) is taught in English in the afternoon.

Information about this inspection

- This inspection was carried out at the request of the registration authority for independent schools. The purpose of the inspection was to monitor the progress the school has made in meeting the independent school standards and other requirements that it was judged to not comply with at its previous inspection.
- This was the sixth monitoring inspection since the full standard inspection in November 2014.
- The inspection took place without notice.
- The inspection focused on Parts 1, 2, 3 and 8 of the independent school standards.
- Inspectors visited classes in the early years and the main school to observe learning.
- Inspectors looked at work in pupils' books and met with two groups of pupils.
- Inspectors met with governors, senior leaders and two independent consultants employed by the school.
- Inspectors scrutinised a range of documentation including that relating to the curriculum, admissions and attendance and safeguarding.
- There were no responses to the Ofsted online questionnaire, Parent View.

Inspection team

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